
NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda

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Where is the Science? Honda Questions Energy Secretary on Bush Energy Plan
Charges White House with Only Paying 'Lip Service' to Conservation, New Technologies

Washington, DC— During a House Committee on Science hearing on the energy crisis today, U.S. Congressman Mike Honda (D-San Jose) questioned U.S. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham about the lack of scientific basis for the Bush energy plan and the lack of funding for conservation and the development of new energy technologies. Honda asked Abraham why the Bush Administration's newly developed energy policy ignores a recent report from several prominent Department of Energy (DOE) scientists that concluded that new technologies and incentive programs could reduce the growth of electricity demand by 20-47 percent nationwide. The Bush plan focuses almost entirely on increasing domestic fossil fuel production and the Bush budget cuts federal energy conservation programs by 27 percent.

Secretary Abraham responded that the Bush budget was created before the energy plan was completed. Mr. Abraham did not state whether the Administration would reconsider the cuts in energy conservation programs in light of the electricity crisis.

"Despite the fact that their own scientists have proven that the nation gains more from conserving energy than by expanding production, the Bush Administration continues to insist upon a plan that is based almost entirely on increasing domestic oil production," said Science Committee Member, Mike Honda. **"It is painfully obvious that the Bush-Cheney Oil plan is based upon political science—not actual science, and has been designed to serve the oil companies— not the American consumer."**

The Bush Administration also has the distinction of delaying the appointment of a National Science Advisor— a senior position at the White House that directs federal scientific research and technology policy in coordination with DOE and other agencies, longer than any other administration in U.S. history. The previous record holder, the Reagan Administration, took over five months to appoint a Science Advisor—a mark the second Bush Administration has already eclipsed by over a month. Many energy issues turn upon assumptions made about science and technology and national energy policy has traditionally been supported by research, reviews and initiatives by the White House Office of Science & Technology Policy.

"It is very troubling that President Bush has failed to appoint a Science Advisor to help make sure that our energy policy is guided by sound science," continued Honda. **"The failure to make this important appointment speaks volumes about this Administration's disregard for objective scientific analysis when making policy decisions during its first six months."**

